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BY STERN
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GAMMILL / BREEDING

SUPERMAN IN ACTION COMICS

AT
LONG
LAST...



DON'T MISS
SUPERMAN
NO. 53
IN 2 WEEKS!

...THE
SECRET
REVEALED!

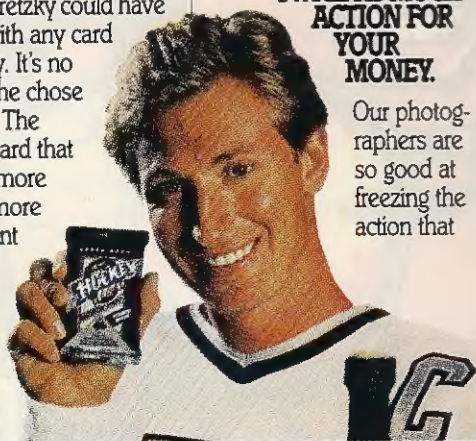
THERE ARE HOCKEY CARDS. AND THEN THERE IS UPPER DECK.

**AFTER TWO
SOLD OUT YEARS
IN BASEBALL,
UPPER DECK™ IS
REVOLUTIONIZING
HOCKEY CARDS!**

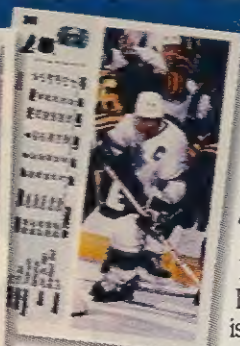
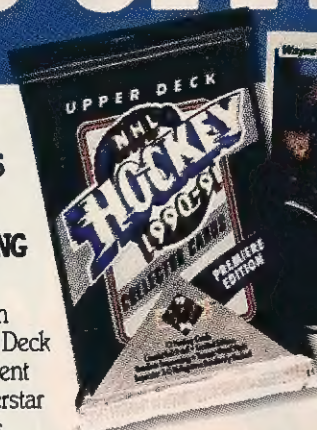
Ask any baseball fan about the stir Upper Deck caused when we went from rookie to superstar in the last two years. Now it's hockey's turn.

THE GREAT ONES: WAYNE GRETZKY AND UPPER DECK!

Wayne Gretzky could have signed with any card company. It's no surprise he chose the best. The hockey card that delivers more quality, more excitement



NOBODY FREEZES THE ACTION LIKE UPPER DECK.™



and more hockey action. Also part of our winning team are Brett Hull, Mark Messier and Steve Yzerman.

TWICE AS MUCH ACTION FOR YOUR MONEY.

Our photographers are so good at freezing the action that

we put two dynamite pictures on each card.

OUR SPECIAL CARDS ARE TRULY SPECIAL.

You get spectacular graphics and bios. Our first Superstars of Hockey features Wayne Gretzky in a revolutionary 3-D Holographic portrait.



THE "COLLECTOR'S CHOICE"™ MEANS ACTION TODAY AND COLLECTIBILITY TOMORROW.

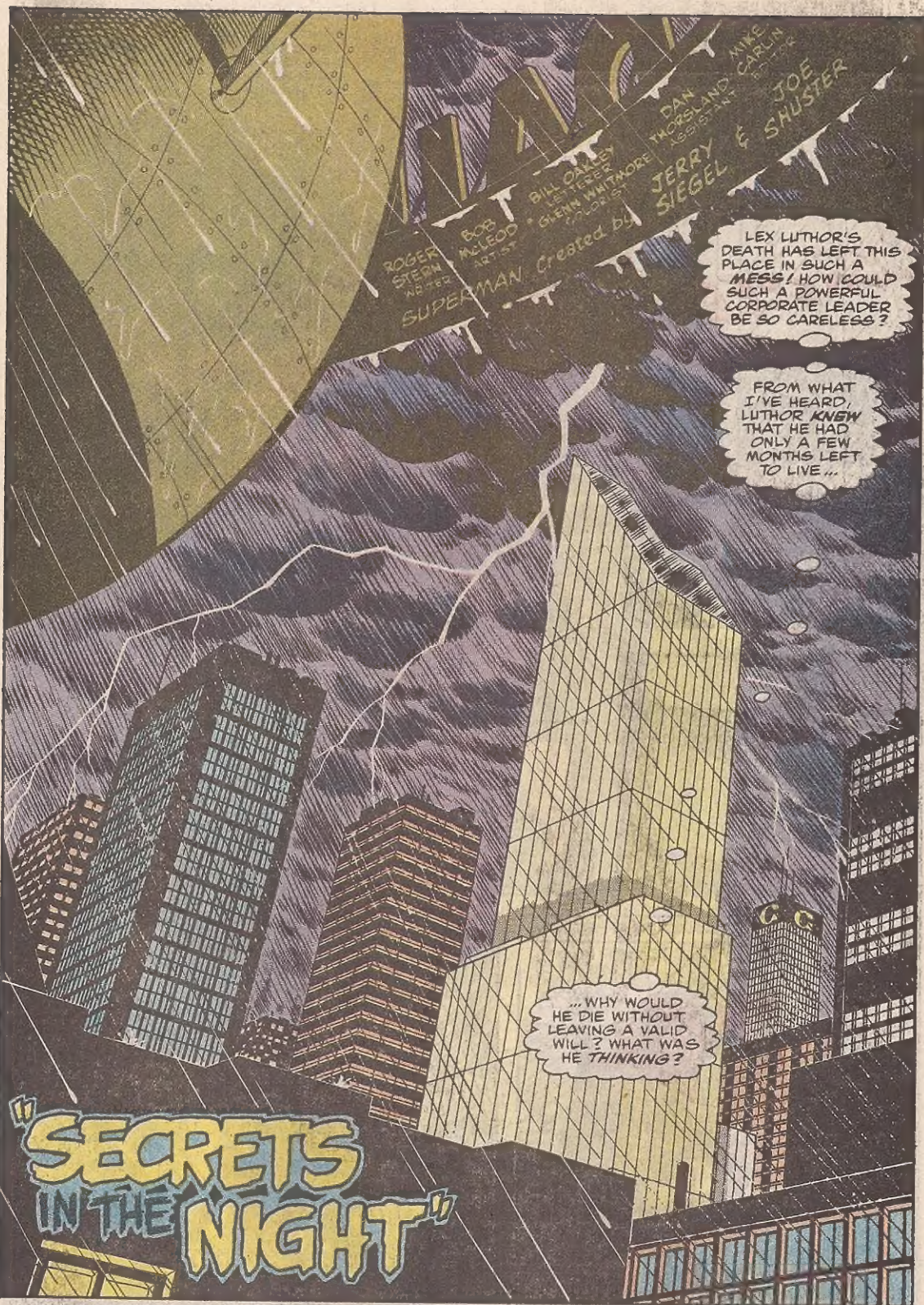
Every Upper Deck Hockey 12-card pack is a surprise with our exclusive random sequencing, tamper-proof foil pack and security holograms.

Just one more reason

Upper Deck Cards are called "The Collector's Choice."

This year make sure you buy the best of hockey action because there are hockey cards and now there is Upper Deck.





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SUPERMAN

JERRY
SIEGEL

LEX LUTHOR'S
DEATH HAS LEFT THIS
PLACE IN SUCH A
MESS! HOW COULD
SUCH A POWERFUL
CORPORATE LEADER
BE SO CARELESS?

FROM WHAT
I'VE HEARD,
LUTHOR KNEW
THAT HE HAD
ONLY A FEW
MONTHS LEFT
TO LIVE...

... WHY WOULD
HE DIE WITHOUT
LEAVING A VALID
WILL? WHAT WAS
HE THINKING?

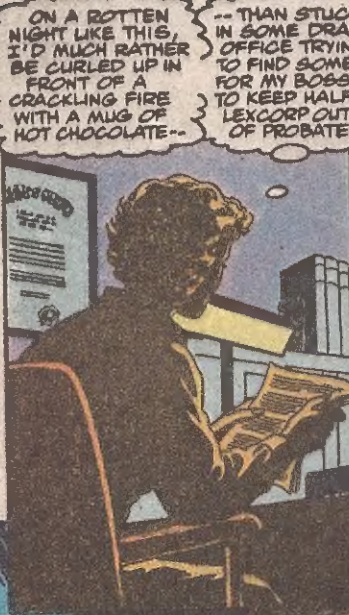
"SECRETS IN THE NIGHT"

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WELL, HE CERTAINLY WASN'T THINKING OF US JUNIOR-LEVEL CORPORATE ATTORNEYS WHO'VE BEEN HANDED THIS JOB!



ON A ROTTEN NIGHT LIKE THIS, I'D MUCH RATHER BE CURLED UP IN FRONT OF A CRACKLING FIRE WITH A MUG OF HOT CHOCOLATE--

-- THAN STUCK IN SOME DRAFTY OFFICE TRYING TO FIND SOME WAY FOR MY BOSSSES TO KEEP HALF OF LEXCORP OUT OF PROBATE!



LUTHOR'S SEVEN EX-WIVES ALONE COULD PROBABLY... WAIT A MINUTE... WHAT'S THIS?

A RAFT OF PAPERS IN LONGHAND?!



"BEING OF SOUND AND DISPOSING MIND AND MEMORY, I, LEX LUTHOR, DO HEREBY MAKE, PUBLISH, AND DECLARE..."

OMIGOSH! IF THIS IS FOR REAL, IT CHANGES EVERYTHING! THE COMPANY...



"...ALL OF METROPOLIS COULD BE AFFECTED!"

THINK I'LL PACK IT IN. ONLY THING WORSE'N RAININ' CATS AN' DOGS IS HAILIN' CABS! HEH-HEH!

JOEY, THAT GAG WAS OLD WHEN MY GRANDPA TOLD IT!

WISH I COULD CALL IT A NIGHT. HAVEN'T SEEN IT THIS BAD SINCE--!



WOOOOOOO

WHOA!

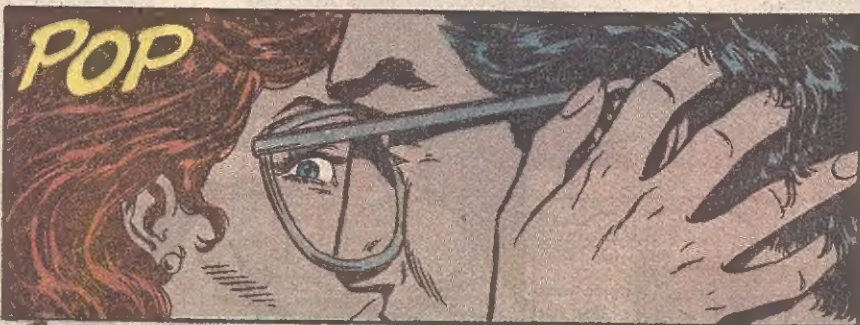
HOLY MOTHER, WHERE'S THIS WIND COMIN' FROM?

AN' THAT HOWL GIVES ME THE CREEPS...



"...THERE IS A RELEASE OF ENERGIES FROM THE NETHER-REALMS THIS NIGHT!

"WERE A MYSTIC TO CHANNEL THOSE ENERGIES, HE WOULD POSSESS POWER ENOUGH TO ROCK THIS WORLD TO ITS VERY CORE..."



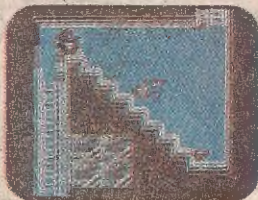




Mega Man[®] III. Anything else you need to know?



*You'll slide through secret
tunnels to avoid
bulldozing robots.*



*It's hard to top TopMan's
dangerous spins.*

SnakeMan, HardMan, GeminiMan, MagnetMan, NeedleMan, ShadowMan, SparkMan and TopMan. They're the eight new robotmasters in MegaMan 3. Defeat them all and you'll still have Dr. Wily to deal with. And possibly even a few of your old enemies from 1 and 2. Okay, now the only question that remains is how fast you can get to the store and get 3.

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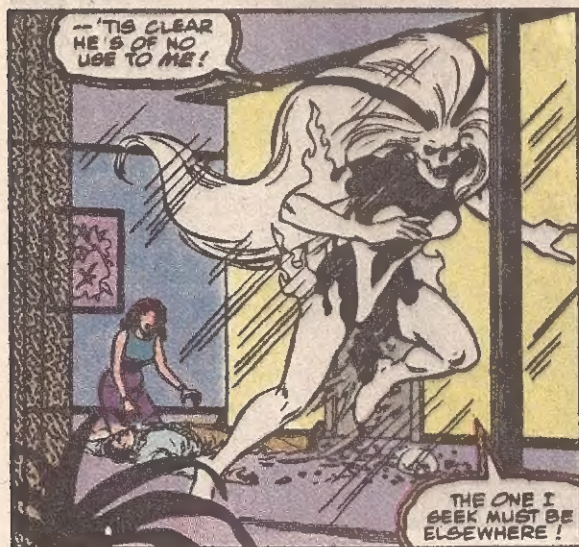
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...OUT HERE AND OFF THE BALCONY. SHE SEEMED TO BE LOOKING FOR SUPERMAN. CLARK, I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

...THE LAST I SAW OF THE BANSHEE WAS ON THAT NORTH CHANNEL ISLAND. I THOUGHT SHE WAS KILLED WHEN HER FAMILY'S CASTLE BLEW UP.*

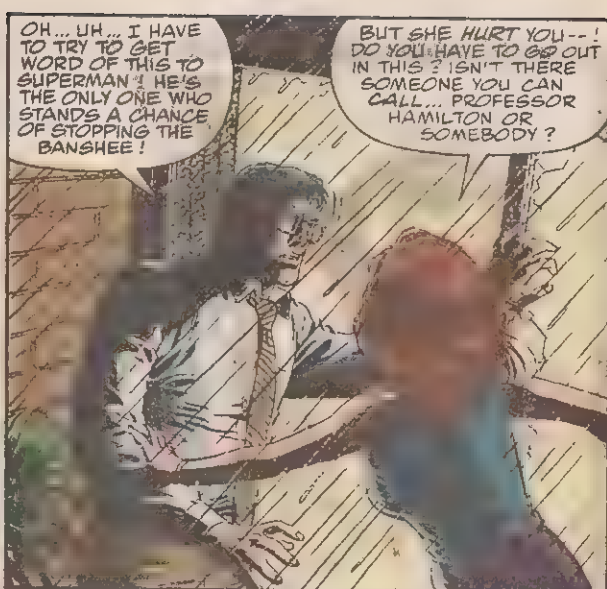
WHY WOULD SHE HAVE COME HERE... TO MY APARTMENT?! COULD SHE BE TRYING TO FIND SUPERMAN THROUGH THE PEOPLE WHO WERE LAST AT THE CASTLE?

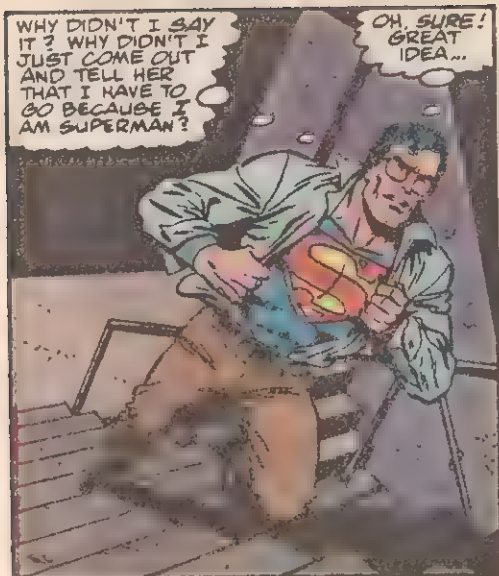
I DON'T KNOW, DEAR. THERE'S NO SIGN OF HER NOW...



* IN SUPERMAN #23.

** IN ACTION #595 & SUPERMAN #17.





WHY DIDN'T I SAY IT? WHY DIDN'T I JUST COME OUT AND TELL HER THAT I HAVE TO GO BECAUSE I AM SUPERMAN?

OH, SURE! GREAT IDEA...



"...AND I'LL BE BACK AS SOON AS I DEAL WITH SILVER BANSHEE, HONEY!" WOULDN'T THAT HAVE REASSURED HER?

BUT I CAN'T GO ON KEEPING THIS A SECRET FROM THE WOMAN I'M GOING TO MARRY! I HAVE TO TELL HER, SOONER OR LATER!



WELL, IT'LL HAVE TO BE LATER NOW. I CAN'T DWELL ON PERSONAL MATTERS WITH THE BANSHEE AT LARGE.

HOW DID SHE TRACK ME TO LOIS'S APARTMENT? AND WHAT DOES SHE WANT?

WHEN SHE FIRST SHOWED HER FACE IN THE CITY, SHE WAS LOOKING FOR A LOST BOOK--

"-- THE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF HER CLAN. THERE WAS AN ENCHANTMENT ON ITS PAGES.

"SHE WAS DETERMINED TO REGAIN THAT BOOK, AND MORE THAN WILLING TO KILL ANYONE WHO GOT IN HER WAY.

"SHE NEVER DID FIND IT-- BUT I DID, THANKS TO THE BATMAN.

"FROM THE BOOK, I LEARNED OF THE CAVES BENEATH CASTLE BROEN-- AND THROUGH ITS ENCHANTMENTS, I RESCUED LOIS AND JIMMY FROM THE BANSHEE...

"... AND CAME FACE TO FACE WITH THE ENTITY WHO HAD GIVEN HER THE POWER... A MYSTERIOUS, ANCIENT CREATURE..."



GUARD WELL AGAINST MORTAL VICES, SUPERMAN! AND REMEMBER THAT NO MATTER HOW POWERFUL YOU BECOME... A GREATER POWER THERE WILL ALWAYS BE!

GARGOYLES



GRAPHICS SO REAL YOU'LL FORGET IT'S ONLY A GAME



Game Boy! Enchantment and excitement await you in Gargoyle's Quest.

Prepare to do battle as Firebrand, the last Guardian Gargoyle of the Ghoulish Realm. You must act quickly to defend your world against an invading army of Destroyers.



Dazzling graphics and excellent sound bring a whole new dimension to the

Fight your way through enemy forces to reach the dimensional portal that leads to your home world. Once there, the true nature of the quest begins.

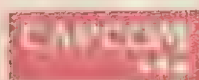
The King of the Ghoulish Realm has been kidnapped and it's up to you to save him. Blast the attackers with fiery breath as you fly through their defenses. Unravel the mysteries of this multilevel universe to succeed in conquering the Destroyers and freeing the captive King.



• Highly-detailed artwork sets new standards for the Game Boy!

• Advanced playability, highlighted with 360 degree scrolling.

• Hours of entertainment await you in this diverse adventure.



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RAMADA INN, Route 46 West, 1/4 m. from Willowbrook Mall

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6 ST. LOUIS, MO.
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...AND THEN THE CRONE LEVELED THE PLACE! I'D THOUGHT... I'D HOPED THAT WAS THE LAST WE'D EVER SEE OF SILVER BANSHEE.

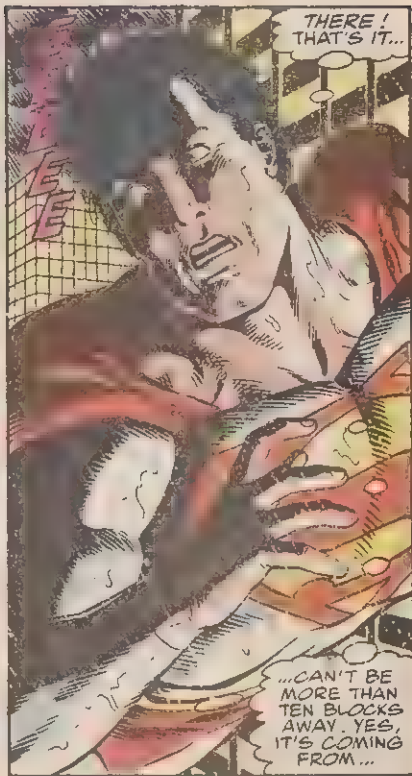


AS STRONG AS I AM, I'M STILL VULNERABLE TO THE SUPER-NATURAL.

YET, FOR ALL HER BIZARRE POWER, BANSHEE WAS ONCE MORTAL... SHE ISN'T ALL-KNOWING, OR SHE WOULD HAVE REALIZED THAT I WAS CLARK KENT.

I HAVE TO SURPRISE HER BEFORE SHE SURPRISES ME AGAIN.

HER WAIL HAS A DISTINCTIVE ULTRA-SONIC HARMONIC... IF I CAN BLOCK OUT THE EXTRANE-EDUS SOUND, CONCENTRATE ON THAT FREQUENCY...

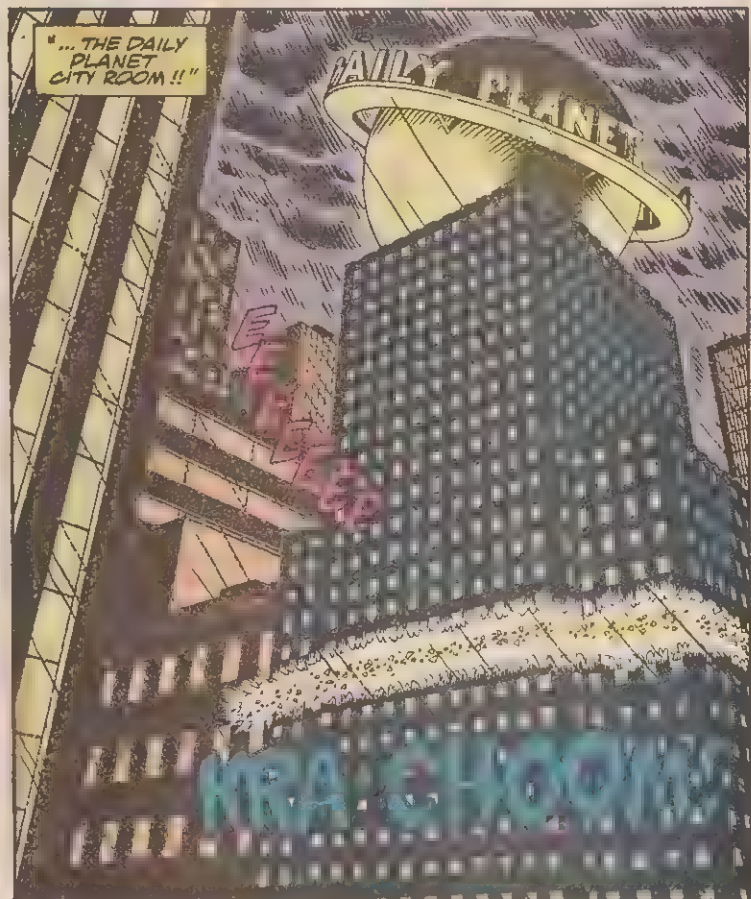


THERE! THAT'S IT...

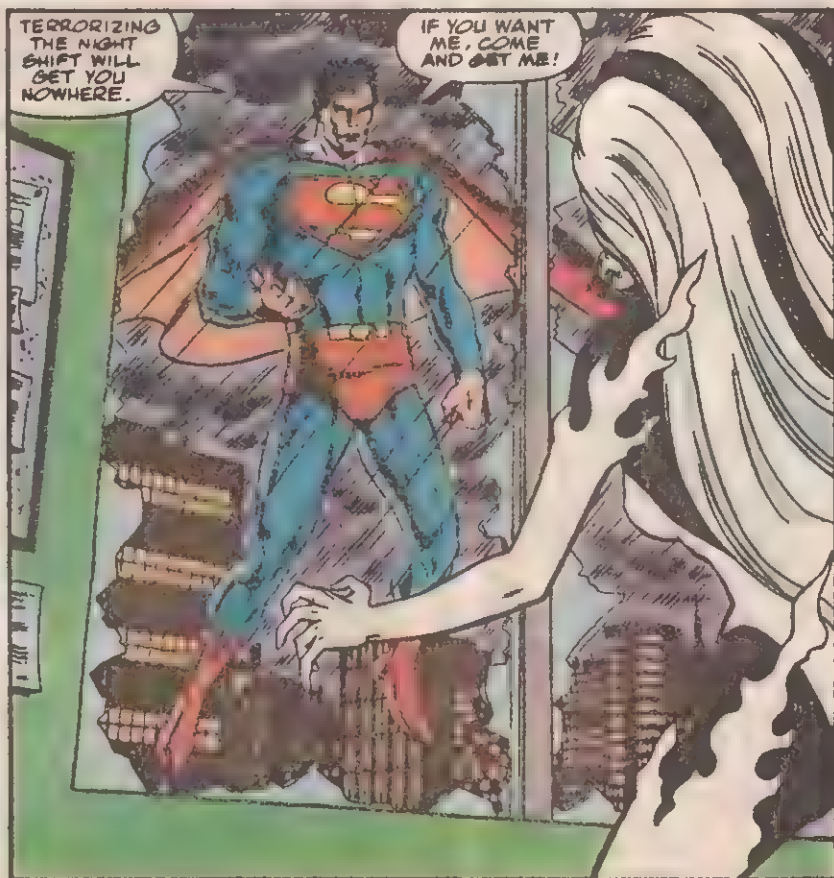
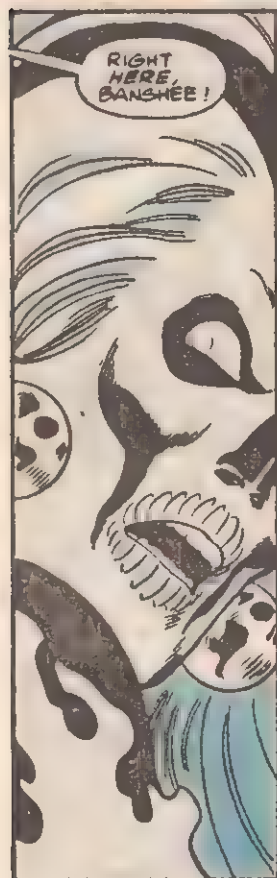
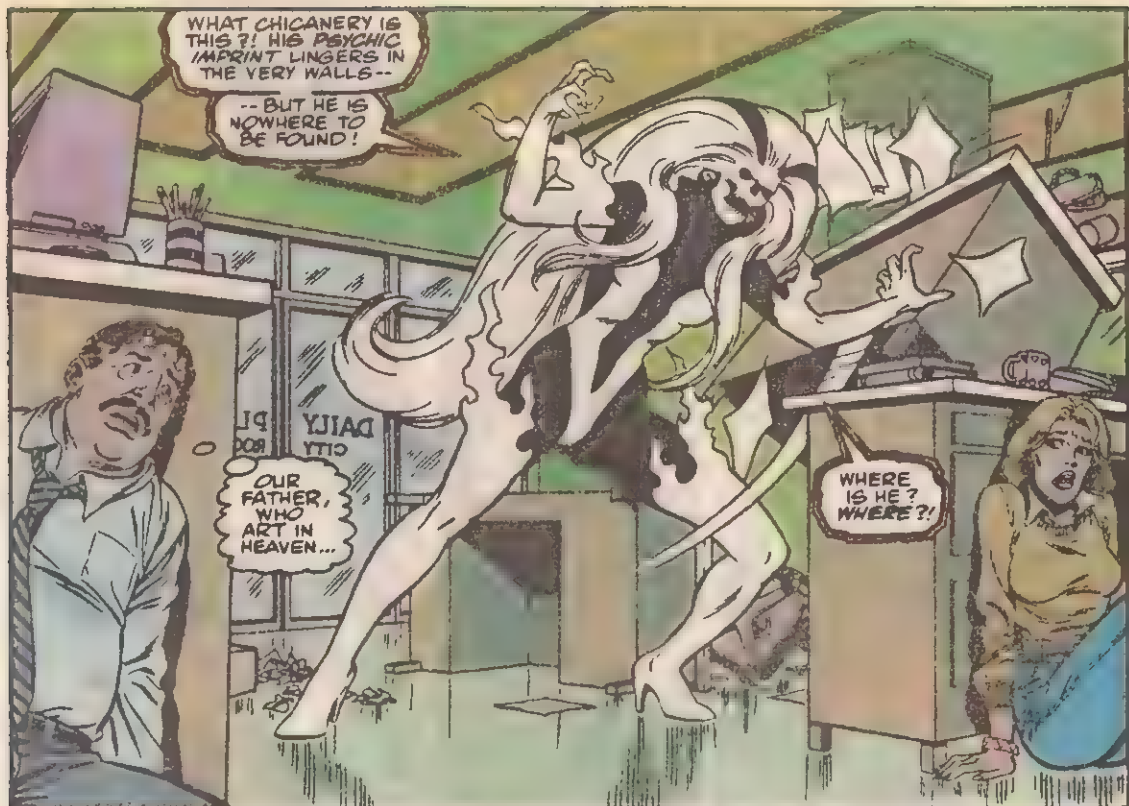
...CAN'T BE MORE THAN TEN BLOCKS AWAY. YES, IT'S COMING FROM...

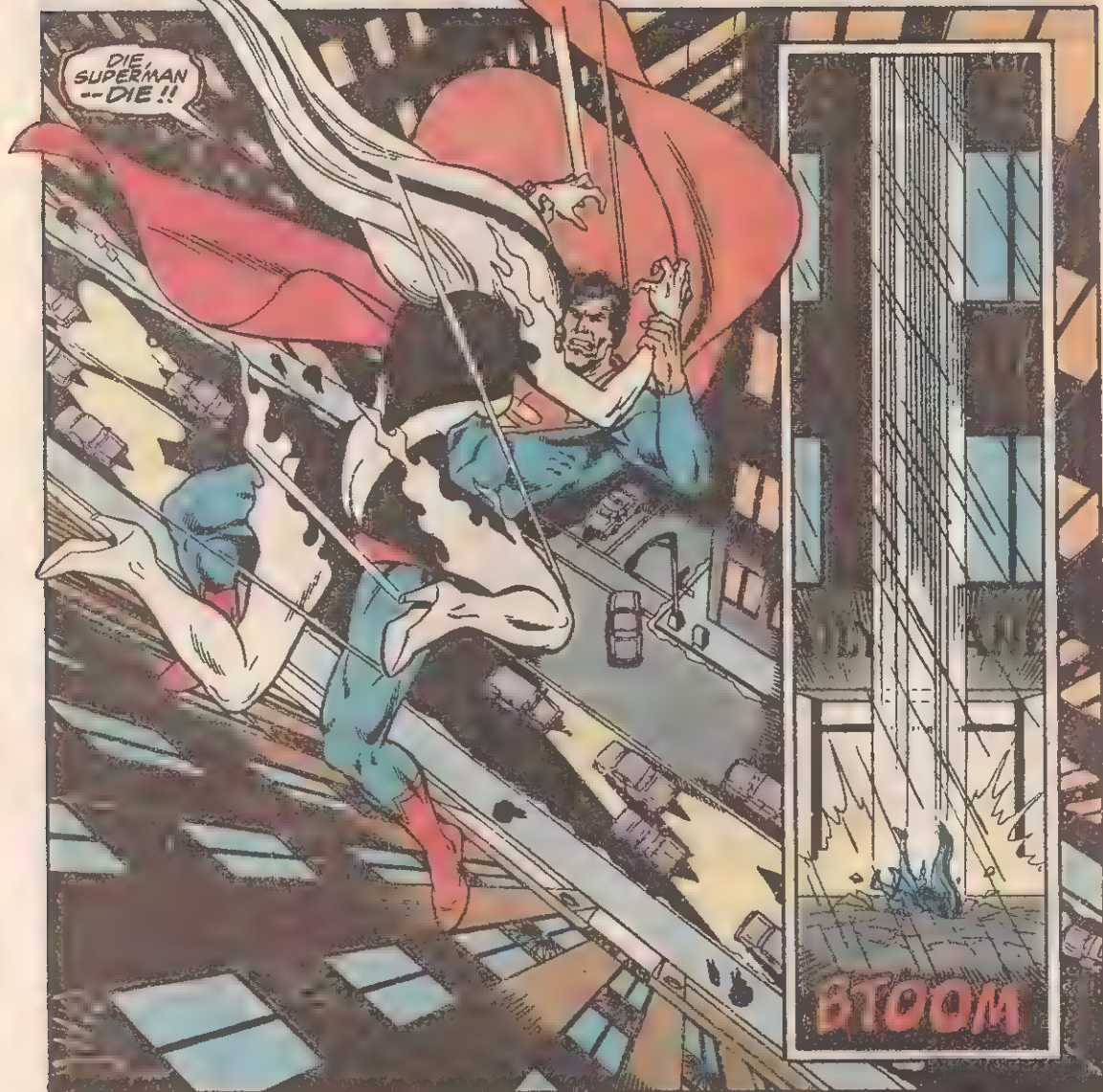
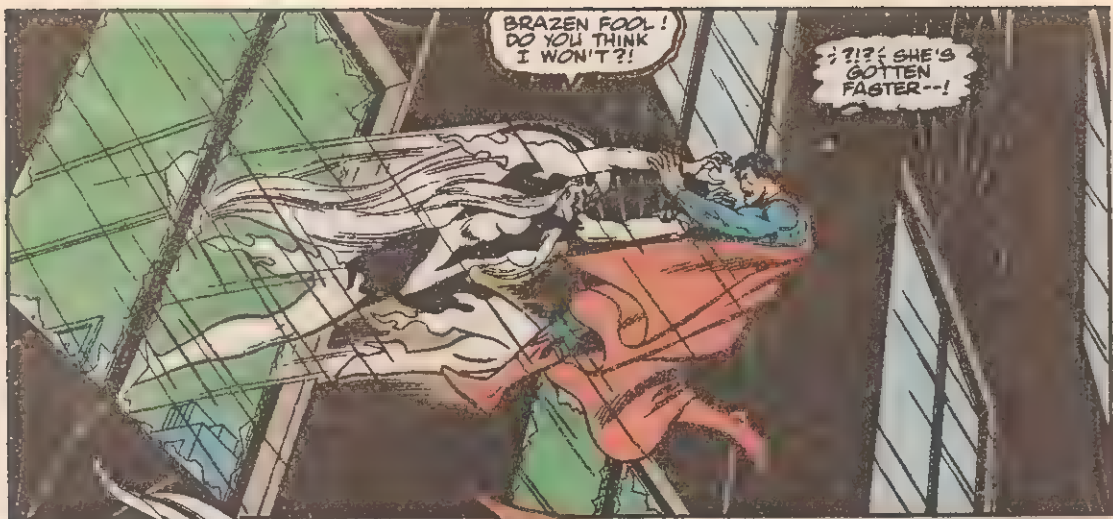


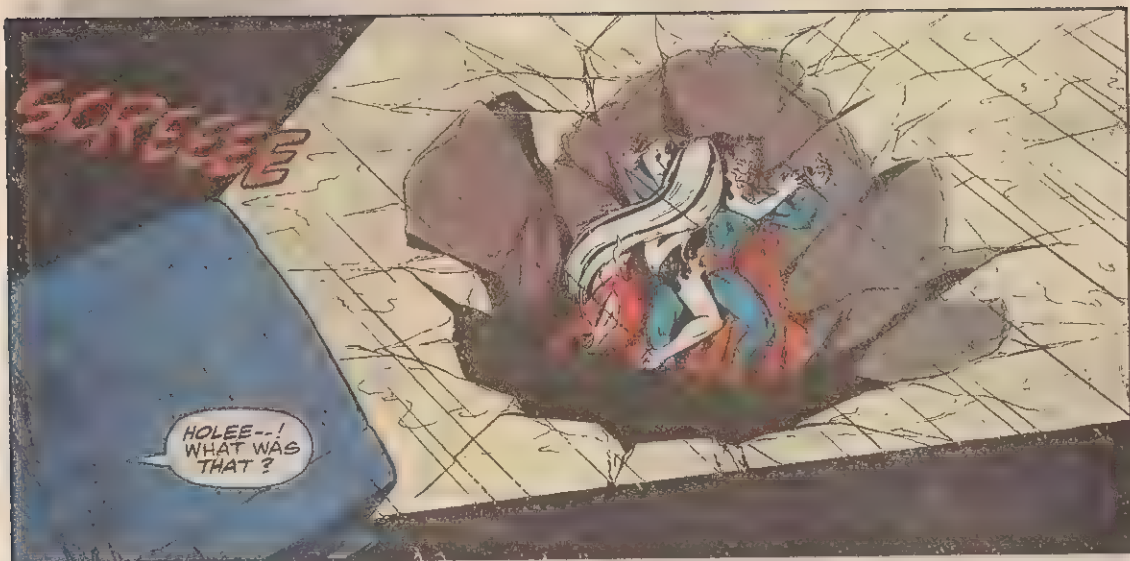
"...OH! NO..."



"... THE DAILY PLANET CITY ROOM!!"





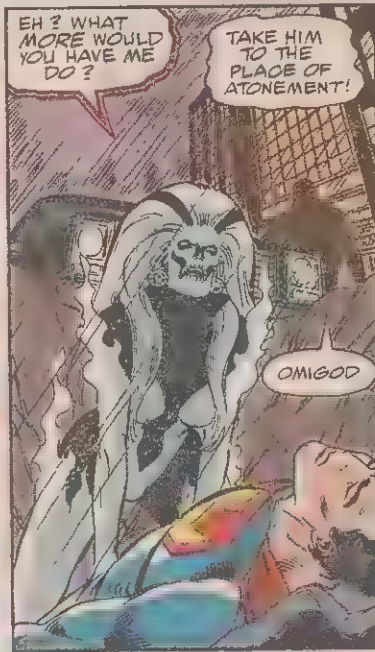


HOLEE--!
WHAT WAS
THAT?



AT LAST
...IT IS
OVER!

NO, BANSHEE...
NOT YET...



EH? WHAT
MORE WOULD
YOU HAVE ME
DO?

TAKE HIM
TO THE
PLACE OF
ATONEMENT!

OMIGOD



DO
SOME-
THING!

YOU KIDDIN'?
THAT'S SUPERMAN
SHE'S TOTALED!

"DO YOU KNOW
WHAT THIS
MEANS--"

--IF THE HANDWRITING
AND THE WITNESSES'
SIGNATURES CAN BE
VERIFIED? IT MEANS
I'VE FOUND A VALID
WILL!

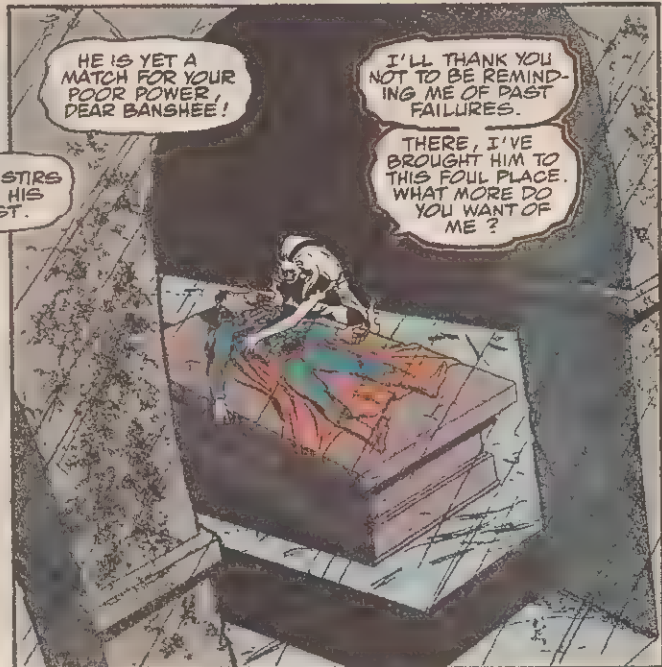
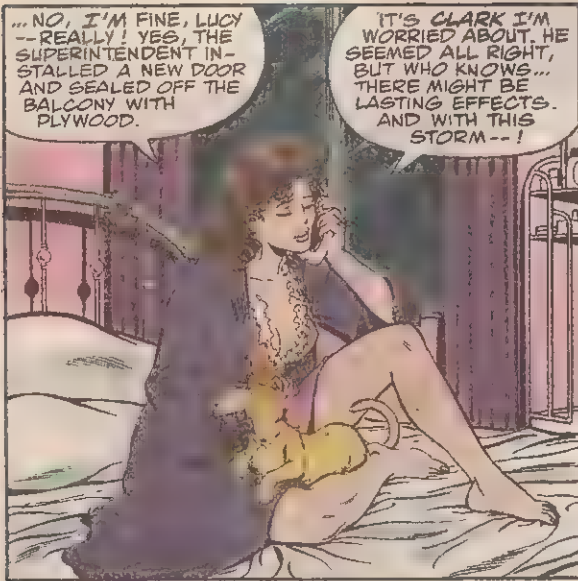
THIS
STATE ALLOWS
FOR Holo-
GRAPHic WILLS
UNDER--!

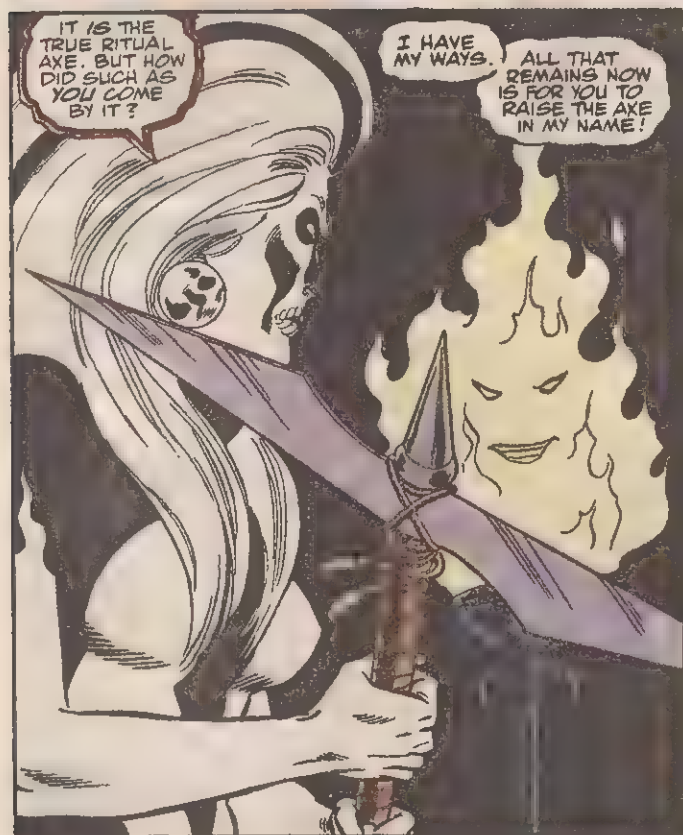
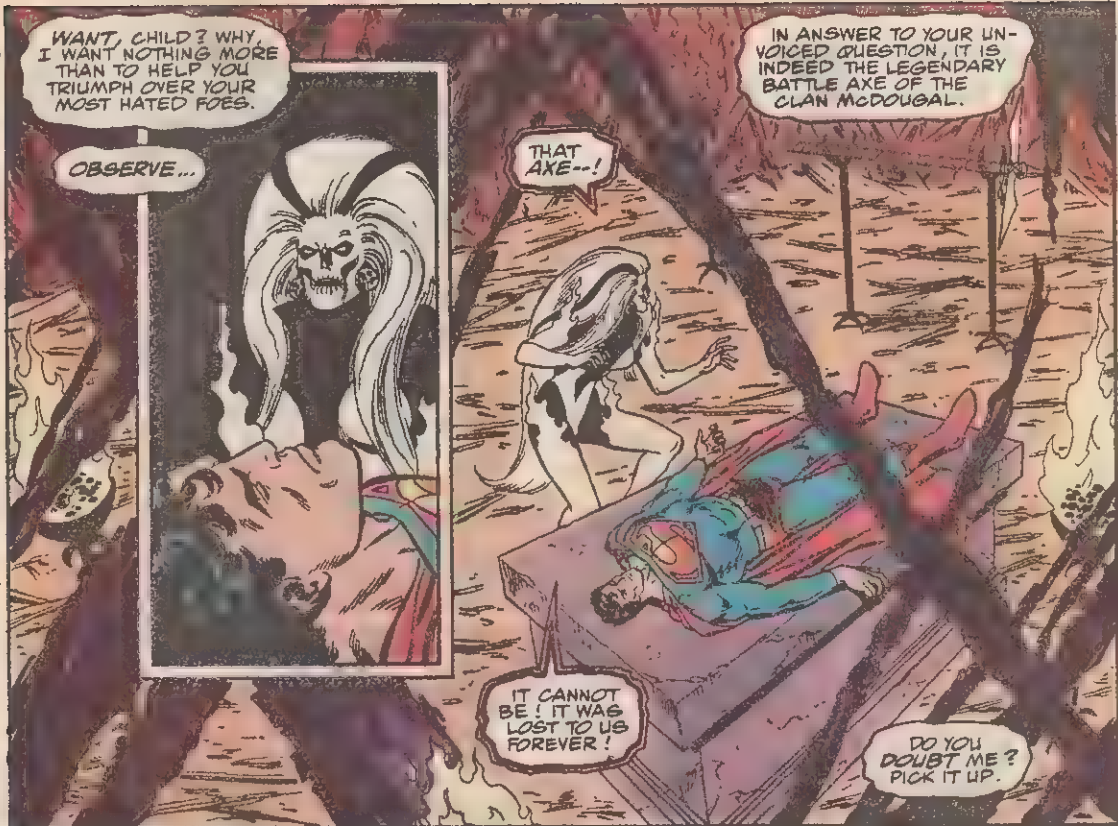


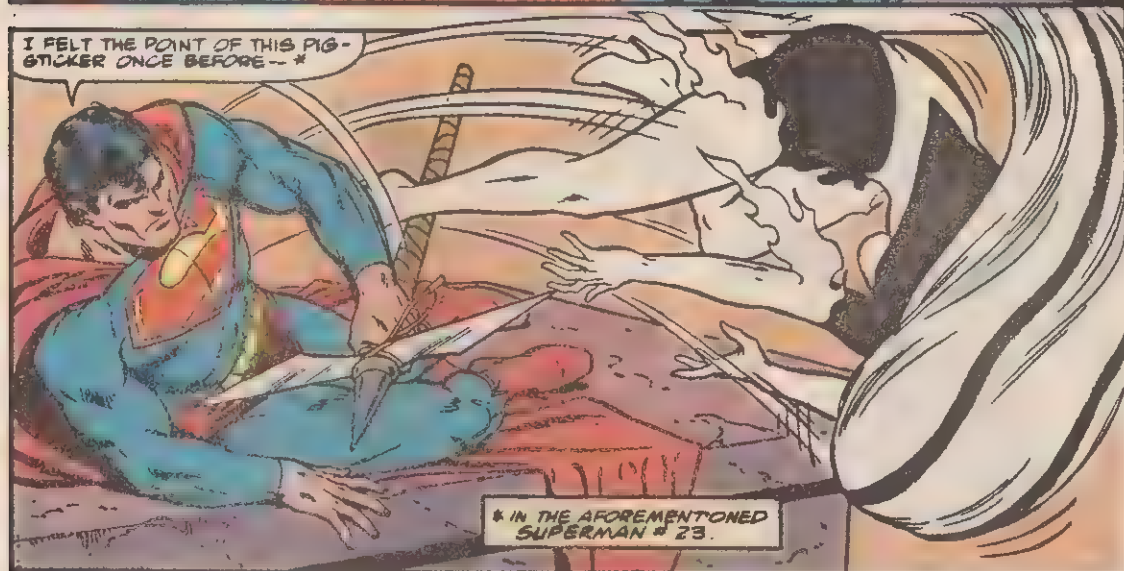
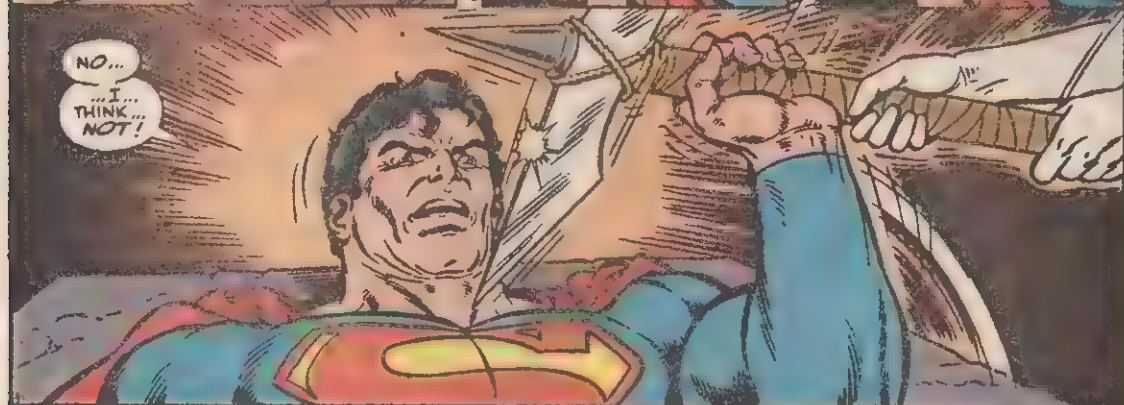
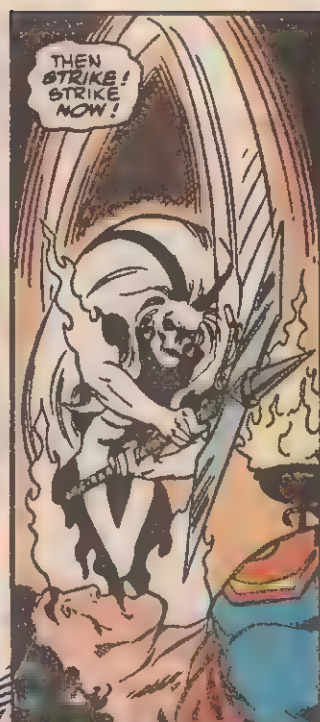
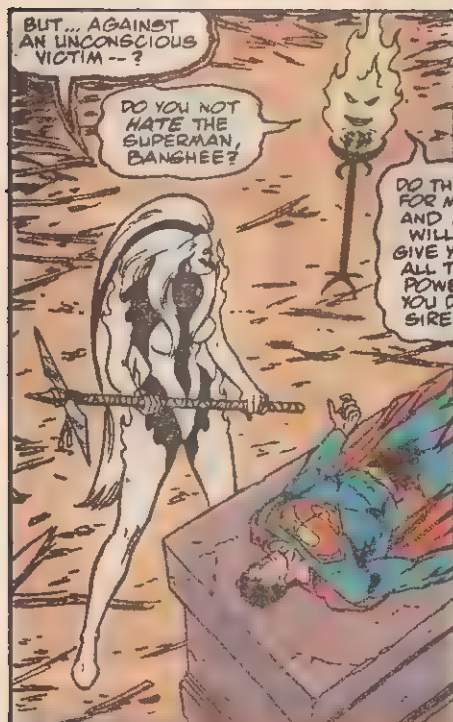
I AM WELL
AWARE OF THE LAW,
MS. FENSTER. AND
I AGREE, IT DOES
APPEAR TO BE
AUTHENTIC.

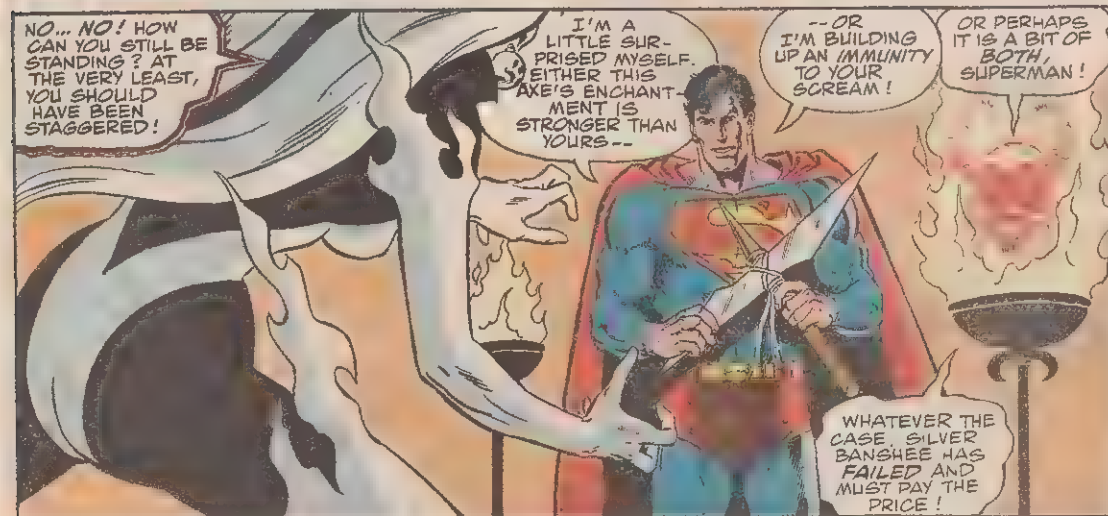
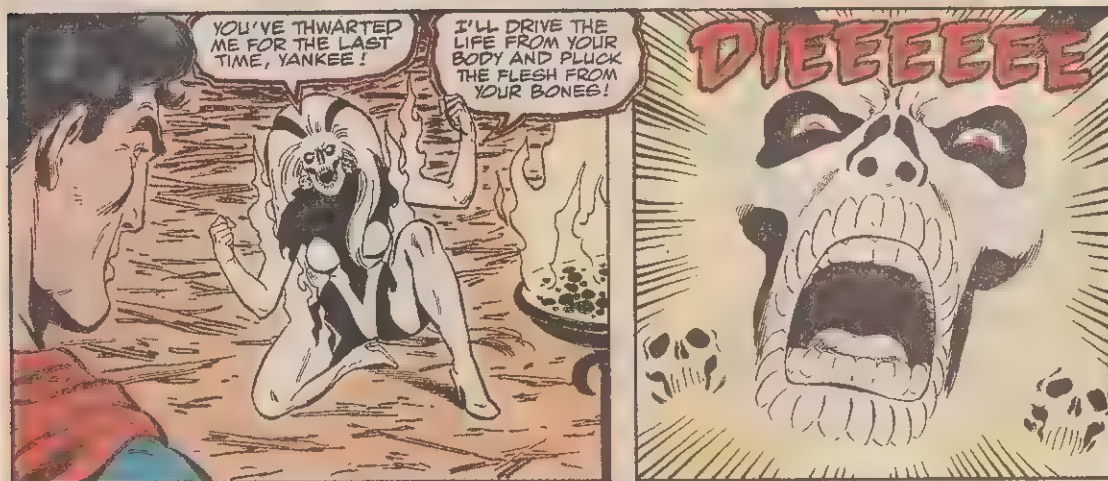
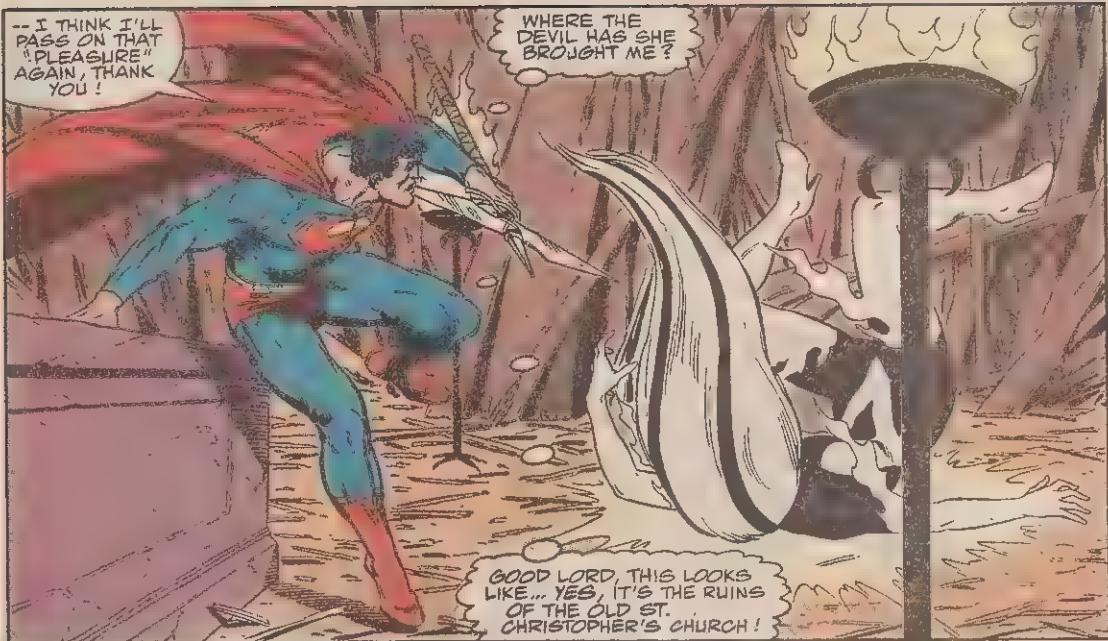
LUTHOR HAS
CLEARLY NAMED HIS
HEIR. NOW ALL WE
HAVE TO DO IS
FIND HIM!

"I'M ALMOST AFRAID TO THINK
WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN NEXT..."









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WHAT IS THE ULTIMATE GAME CLUB?

We are the largest mail order company of its kind where you the consumer can join and have the ability to buy games at low prices, days and sometimes weeks before they come out elsewhere.

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We are at 1491 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook, CT 06475. We also have several stores in CT. Soon there will be a store near you!

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For sales only 1-203-388-6741. For customer service or questions about your order call 1-203-388-6366. For information on new games, release dates, new products, what we buy your used games for call 1-900-TIP-LINE.

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Quite simply EVERYTHING! We sell both new and used games for all American and Japanese systems. We buy direct from the manufacturer to save you money as a member. We sell Nintendo, Sega & B, Genesis, Turbo Grafx, Gameboy, Lynx, PC Engine, Super Grafx, Famicom, Super Famicom, Japanese Gameboy, Neo Geo, FM Towns plus any and all other systems that will come out in the future.

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8. We have stores and showrooms you can visit and experience. Not just a cold office and an empty warehouse!
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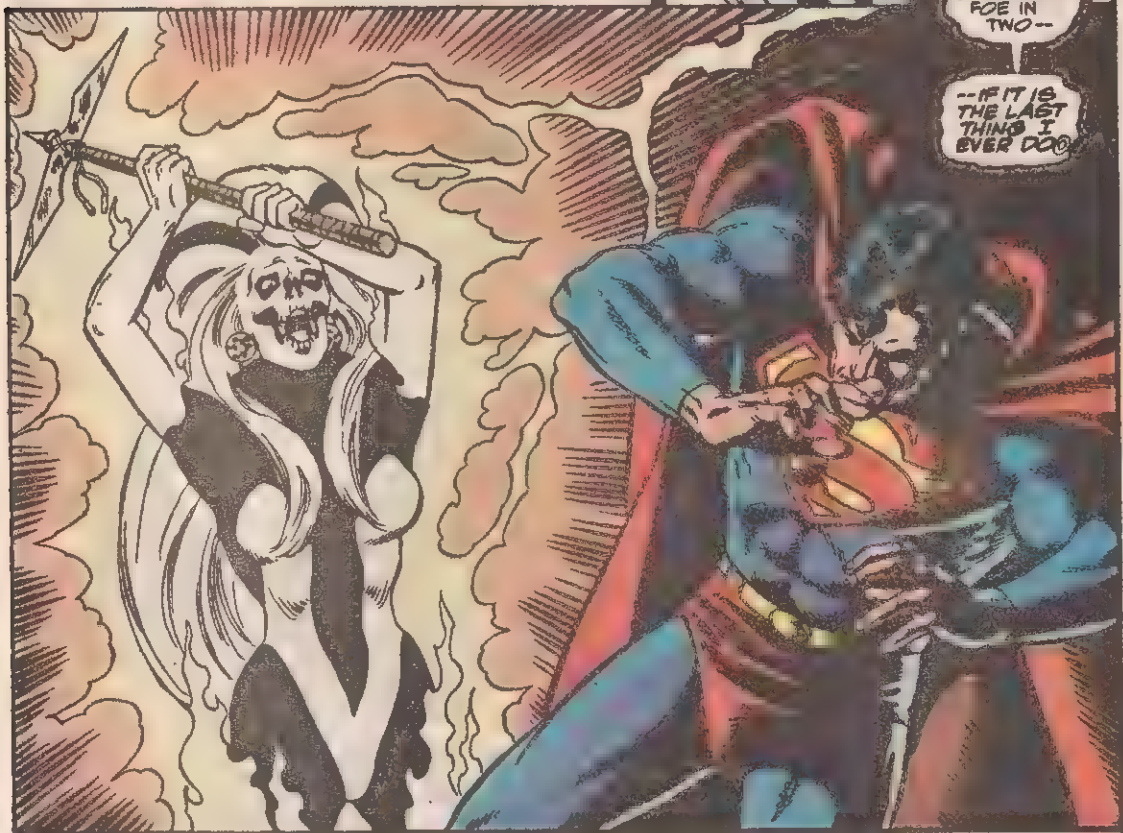
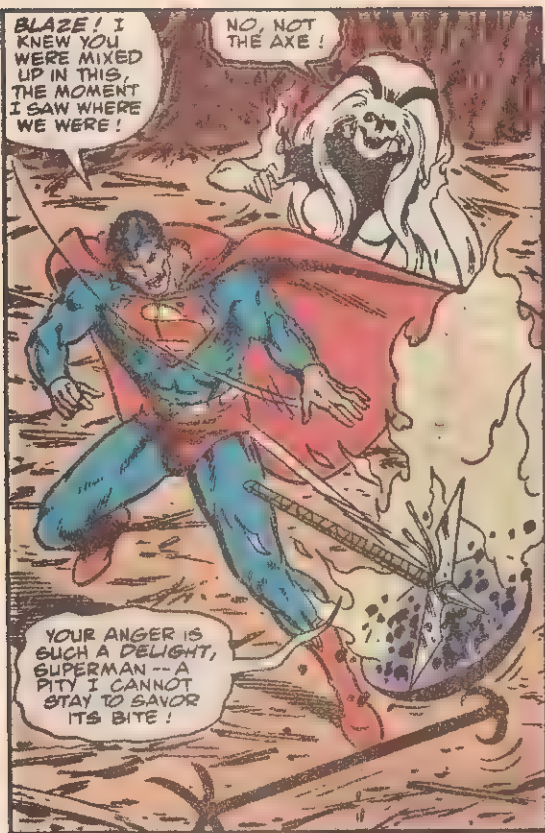
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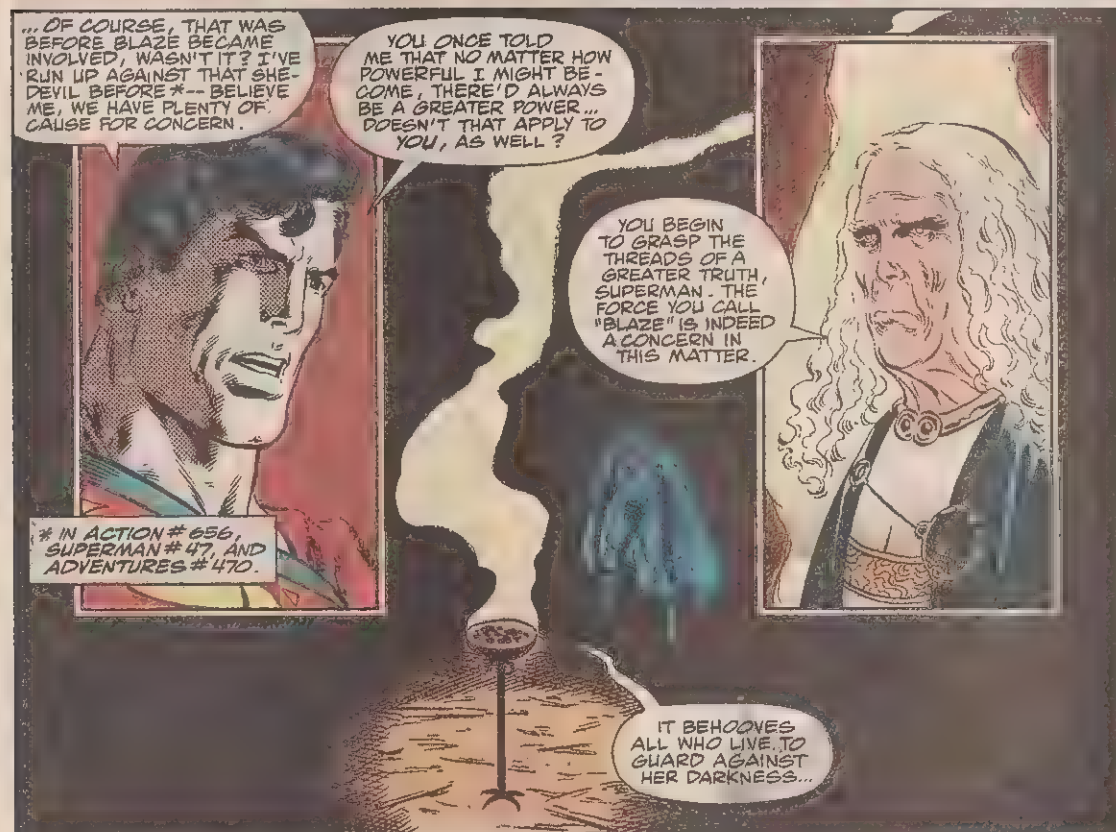
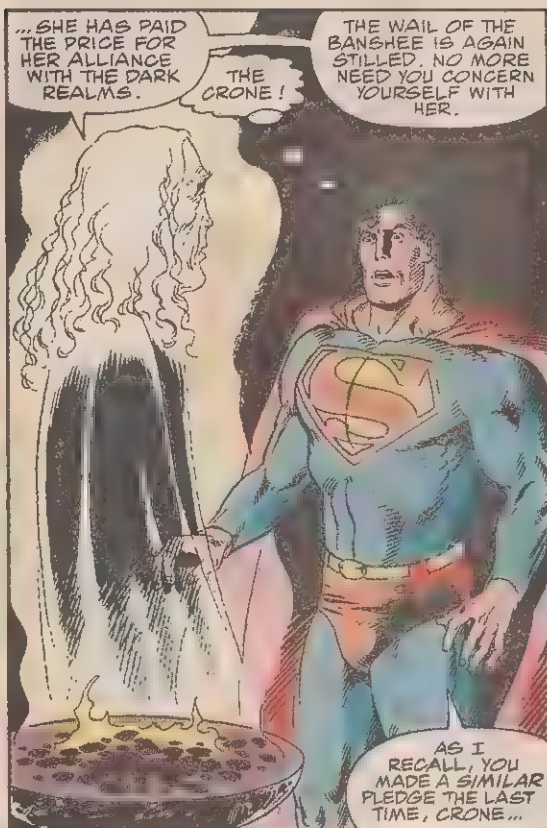
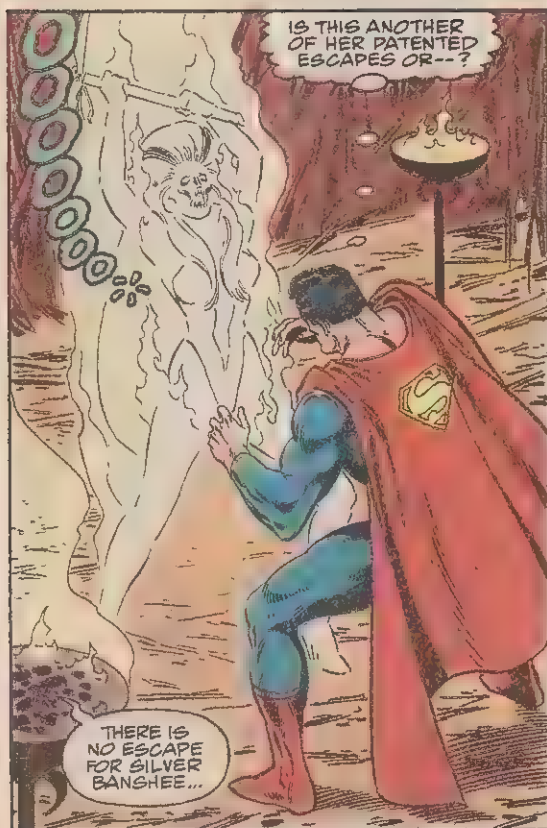
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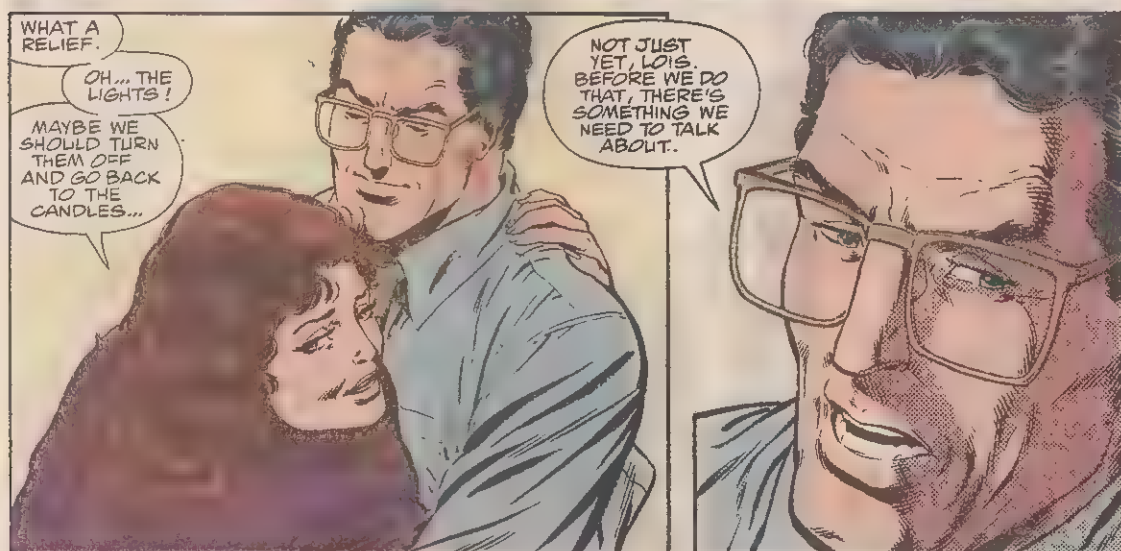
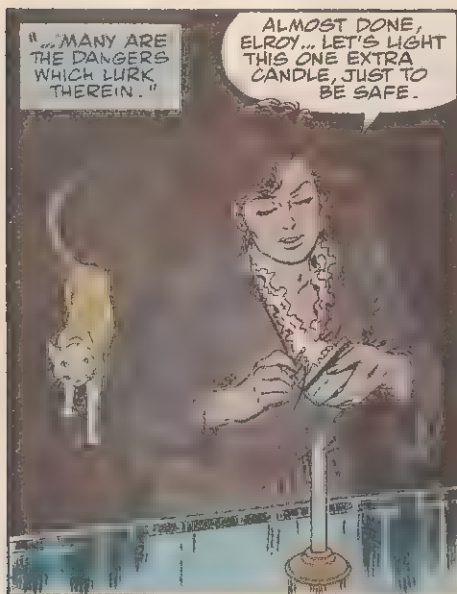
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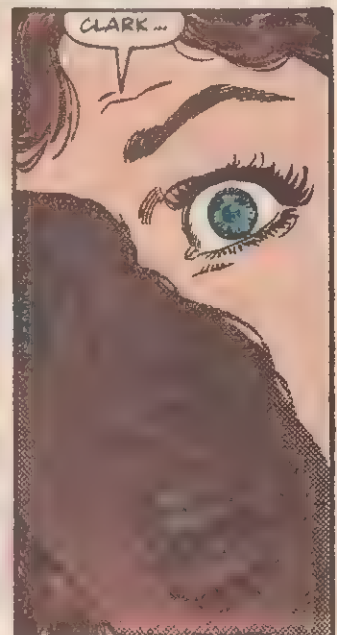
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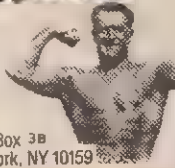
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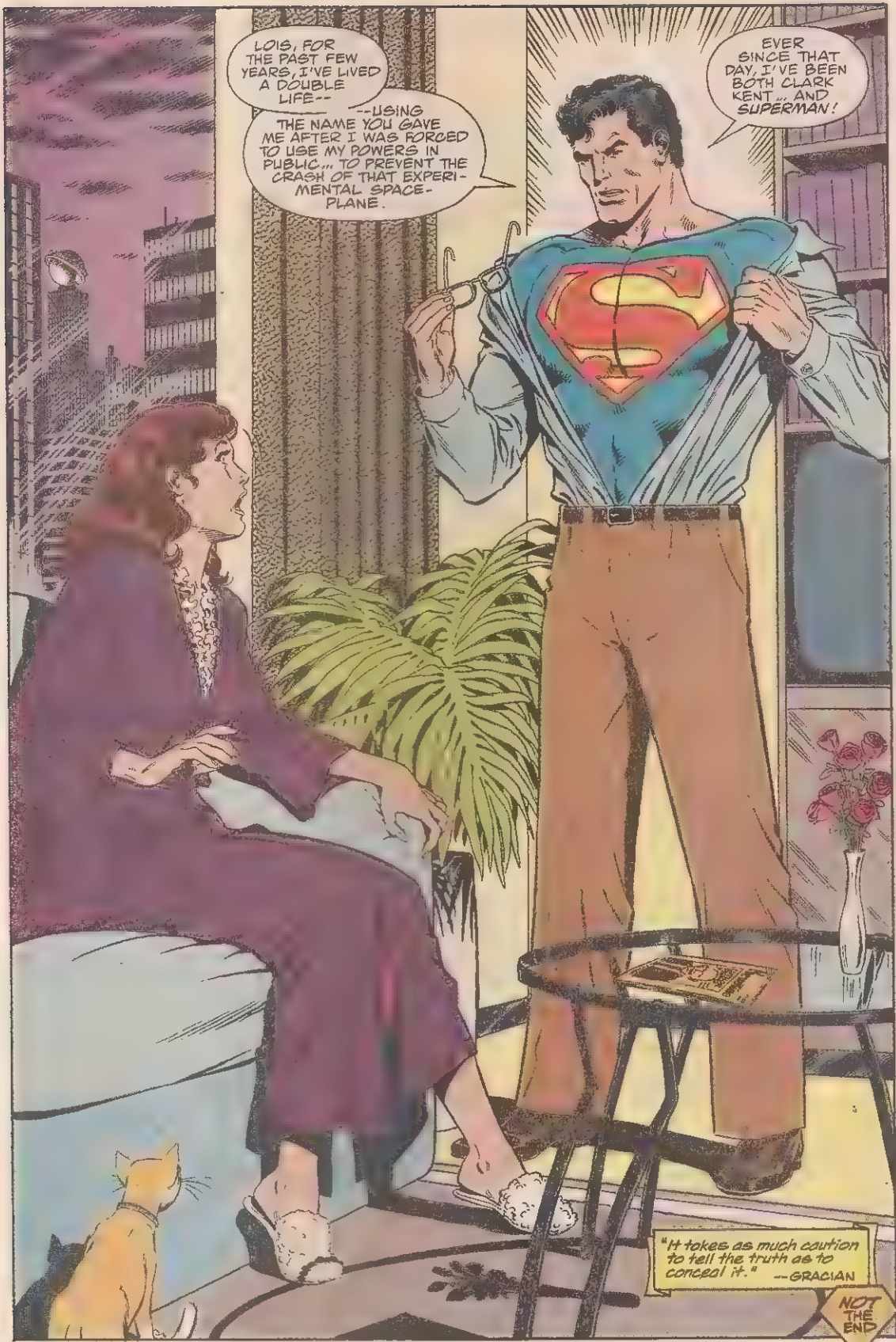
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NOT THE END

REACTION

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We're answering mail on both ACTION COMICS #857 and #858 this month, so let's get to it...

Dear Editor:

Aaaawwww, how sweet. That's how I felt after reading ACTION #857. Don't get me wrong—I like the Toyman. He just gets beaten too easily. He needs to take some lessons in being bad.

Justin Holcomb
No address given

Dear Mike:

Re: ACTION #857

It's been a while since the Toyman has been heard from, and it is a welcome treat to see Winslow Schott hale and hearty, not the same deranged genius many a long-time fan remembers, but a sympathetic character whose anger is misplaced and whose motives (as in this issue) are misdirected. But one thing is certain—the reasons for his disappearance in SUPERMAN #13 are abundantly clear and surprising. Who'd have thought that Intergang—or more specifically, Morgan Edge—would have spirited Schott out of potential capture? Not I, said the letterhead.

There is hope for Schott to be rehabilitated and to have more reasonable means by which to carry out his vendetta against Luthor. Unfortunately, that has been said before throughout Toyman's career. He has tried to assimilate himself into society and legitimate business, yet he ultimately reverts back to crime. I can see that happening here, but please, not so frequently. Give Schott a chance to become a respectable businessman and build upon it once he's free from prison, before he launches another crime spree.

Awaiting Sinbad, and hoping his story is worth reading...

Jacob Gilbert
118 Fourth Street, Apt. 1
Troy, NY 12180

Considering Winslow's recent return in ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN, what do you all think about the Toyman's future—should he reform, creating smiles on kiddies' faces by making toys for them, or should he remain the playful villain we've grudgingly grown fond of? Let us know your thoughts.

And, Jacob, our next reader definitely thought "The Sinbad Contract" was worth reading...

Dear Bill Messner-Loebs and Mike Carlin:

I just wanted to let you know that I enjoyed and appreciated the three-part Sinbad story, especially in light of current world events. I know you had no way of foreseeing Iraq's invasion of Kuwait when this story was being prepared, but the Sinbad trilogy turned into a refreshing counterpoint to the sometimes-hysterical media reports. It is always helpful to remember that people are people, good, bad, and indifferent, not national or racial stereotypes. And I loved Davood's large and loving family. May all super-heroes be so blessed.

Here's hoping we see Sinbad again in the future.

Eileen Roy
3819 Fletcher Drive #B
Los Angeles, CA 90066

Dear Mike:

Talk about perfect timing! You guys couldn't have picked a more apt time for "The Sinbad Contract" story line to debut. Right in the middle of this Iraq-Kuwait affair! So, is Qurac the Iraq equivalent in the DC Universe? If so, perhaps Superman should make a return visit to teach "Saddam Hussein" a lesson about invading "Kumqust" (if you get my meaning).

It's a shame Davood misunderstood Superman's intentions on page 20. Just because Supes trashed Qurac last year (?) doesn't mean he hates all Quraci people. Let's hope Davood'll learn his lesson during this three-part story.

By the way, it's great seeing Curt Swan doing Superman again, if only for a limited time.

Delmo (The Saint) Walters, Jr.
1299 Grand Concourse
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Back during World War II and comicdom's Golden Age, it wasn't unusual for super-heroes to be symbolically pictured on covers beating up Axis leaders like Hitler and Mussolini. If we were to do a cover or story today featuring Superman roughing up Saddam Hussein, Hussein's lawyers would probably have us in court...

Dear Mr. Messner-Loebs and Mr. Swan:

I recently wrote a letter to one of the Super-books stating that "The Sinbad Contract" was not worth

labeling as a "miniseries within a series." Well, I was wrong. The story was intelligent and a pleasant change of pace from Superman's recent turmoil. Taking a look at how the Quracis reacted to Superman's invasion was long overdue. Sure, the country was supposed to have more terrorists in it than a Chuck Norris film, but Superman should have thought of how the people of Qurac would be affected by it. How can things be improved in Qurac when the world sees it as an enemy of Superman?

Besides that, the Sinbad saga featured art by CURT SWAN, the reason I used to buy Superman comics instead of Spider-Man (plus the fact that Spidey is always whining). Who else could draw so many Superman comics a month without making the characters all look like the Simpsons? Curt's style is never boring, and no one can match his facial expressions. Has Mr. Swan ever considered writing comics?

Bruce M. Venne
22 Glenmore Crescent
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No, Bruce—Curt Swan stays too busy drawing comics to even consider finding the time to write them. But Curt played an important part in the "Exile in Space" Arc in the Super-Books last year—which included the creation of the (gone, but definitely not forgotten) Eradicator!

Dear Mike:

I'll have to admit that the Sinbad trilogy really didn't impress me. I enjoyed Curt Swan's pencils, but the story concentrated on Curt's one weak spot, advanced technology, and showed too little of Superman in action. The story was slow with too much of Superman running around.

The predicted death of Luthor has me fascinated, though. Lex killed by cancer. Not only is it ironic that Luthor die by the substance that killed off Superman's race, it is also ironic that he should die of cancer, the disease he could always supposedly cure if he had put his intelligence to good use in the pre-Crisis universe. I guess we'll find out if Luthor is as smart as he used to be. Apart from a vindictive whim, I hope Luthor can cheat death. He represents the corrupted side of the American Way.

The Superman titles have never been better. I wish people would get

over their prejudice against the Man of Steel, thinking his comics are for little kids. Sure, kids can read the Superman titles without being exposed to "adult" ideas, but that shouldn't count as a minus. The storytelling in the Super-books is awesome. Each month we learn more and more about characters who have been around for over fifty years. The Clark/Lois romance is stunning (when they first kissed, that's all I could talk about for three days!) Superman's relationship with Batman is progressing realistically. A Christmas present here, an invitation to Wayne Manor there. How about a **WORLD'S FINEST** quarterly?

I look forward to the return of Red Kryptonite. How about a Superman graphic novel? And put Superboy back in the Legion.

Chuck Ripley
Fremont, MI

Believe it or not, Mr. Ripley, some events are planned in **LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES** that you'll find surprising...and satisfying.

While there are no plans for a Superman graphic novel, there are a few Superman Prestige Format projects in the developmental stages, but it's way too early to say anything else about them. **WORLD'S FINEST QUARTERLY** may be a bit much, but we'll bet there'll be more **WORLD'S FINEST** team-ups down the road.

Dear Mike:

ACTION #658 held a valuable lesson for all of us: There are two sides to every question. Throughout the Sinbad story line, the inhabitants of Little Qurac have been portrayed as decent, honest people—yet they see Superman as their enemy. What has happened is that they have interpreted Superman's previous actions in Qurac as aggression against Arabs, where we all saw it totally differently.

In the end, Superman helped them, and so they changed their feelings about him. On the other hand, I'm sure their original hostility came as a shock to the Man of Steel, and from now on he'll be more careful how he handles sensitive situations.

Martin Simcox
West Midlands, England

Hey, Michael:

Re: **ACTION COMICS** #668

I enjoyed the sequence in which Superman dealt with the fake officers in his Clark Kent persona. It was a nice little change of pace from the usual. But what happened to Lois over the course of "The Sinbad Contract"? If she's really a good reporter, she should have been all over this situation, yet she didn't even make as much as a cameo appearance. What's the story?

Lookin' forward to the return of Stern, McLeod, and Breeding next issue.

Uncle Elvis
17650 Dawson Road
Dawson Springs, KY 42408

P.S. Since you're in charge of the lettercol, does that also mean you're the title's editor, as well?!

Lois was busy on another story at the time, Elvie—after all, Metropolis is a BIG place, and there's always lots of stuff happening.

And Mike Carlin is still the editor of the Superman titles; the undersigned is just on board as your intrepid letterscolumnist (did we just coin a new word?).

Hello, Gang:

I like Sinbad.

With the current crisis in the Middle East, an Arab hero is very timely. (Of course, I realize that this book was probably written six months before the crisis, so you guys are psychic.) I enjoyed the way you portrayed Devood's family. The generation differences were a nice touch.

Looks like Lex Luthor is dying. He has lost his son, and now he is losing his life. Gee whiz, Mr. Luthor is not having a good month. And I'm eagerly awaiting the return of Red Kryptonite. I always enjoyed Red K stories in the past.

I was very upset when John Byrne left the Superman titles a few years back. I felt that the DC fan had been sold a bill of goods. The company changes the origin of one of the greatest comic-book heroes ever just for the chance to have a great writer work on the titles. Then it seems that before we knew it, Byrne had left the series. When that occurred, though, something wonderful happened—Superman just kept getting better! His stories continued to improve, and the Brainiac series, for example, was a wonderful mixture of the old and new combining to exceed this reader's expectations. Keep up the great work.

Jesse W. Jackson
3705 William Dehaas #2502
Irving, TX 75038

We're glad you feel that the efforts of our creative Super-teams on **ACTION COMICS**, **ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN**, and **SUPERMAN** have reached new heights. Jesse, and to keep hope alive, we'll let you know that we're planning on getting better and better each month!

Let's take this opportunity to clear up a few misconceptions about John Byrne's tenure on **SUPERMAN**. First, Mr. Byrne was not the only reason DC decided to alter Superman's history; the Man of Steel was showing Kryptonian age spots (after all, he'd been around for nearly 50 years at the time) and needed some creative Geritol to perk him up. Superman was slated for change—even without John's superlative efforts. And besides, Mr. Byrne produced an incredible volume of work before leaving the series: his Super-stint lasted over two years, and remember, he was writing and pencilling both **SUPERMAN** and **ACTION COMICS** at the time, he wrote three Superman-related miniseries, a Prestige one-shot, and he eventually ended up

writing **ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN**, too. Whew! That's quite a body of work and it still serves as the current series' foundation. (And if you're a fan of John Byrne's, you'll be happy to know that his **BATMAN 3-D** book is still on sale, he's working on a Prestige Format series starring OMAC, and—ta da da daaaa—he's hard at work on another Superman-based miniseries for next summer!)

Jesse, we enjoyed your letter so much that we've elected to present you with a prize that'll have your friends (and enemies) green with envy...no, not a piece of Green Kryptonite, but the illustrious **BALDY AWARD**. Congratulations, lucky one! Keep watching your mailbox—your Baldy's on its way!

Dear Super-crew:

I have a few complaints about the final chapter of "The Sinbad Contract" in **ACTION COMICS** #658: One is that "Curt Swan Month" is over. Another is that Curt didn't draw Clark Kent winking at the readers in the last panel.

Don't you wish all complaints were this easy?

We readers of the yellow boxes know that "Krisis of the Krimson Kryptonite" is the next story line to come. But what else do you have planned for Superman?

Hurricane Heeran
15908 Sherman Way #5
Van Nuys, CA 91406

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—Michael Eury

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This month's cover was pencilled by Kerry Gammill, inked by Brett Breeding, and colored by the same Mr. Breeding!

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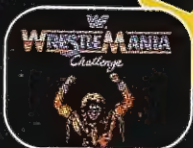
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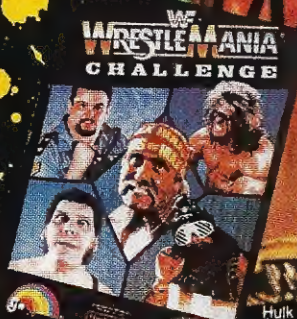
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